



Idaho springsnail

Fonticella idahoensis

STATUS

Endangered (57 FR 59257, December 14, 1992)

DESCRIPTION

Idaho springsnails have narrow, elongate shells about .02 to .25 inches long. Unworn shells are pale olive-tan, but the shell apex usually is eroded and white in color. The snail's body is varied in shades of gray and amber or reddish-brown.

HISTORY

This species is one of the few that survived the ancient Lake Idaho, which existed in southwestern Idaho about 3.5 million years ago. Idaho springsnails were found from Homedale to Bancroft Springs along the Snake River.

DISTRIBUTION

The Idaho springsnail is currently distributed in random locations at sites near the C. J. Strike Reservoir upstream to Bancroft Springs. This distribution represents an 80% reduction in its historic range.

WHAT HAS THREATENED THIS SPECIES?

The free-flowing, cold water environments required by this species have been altered by reservoir development, river diversions and habitat modification. In free-flowing portions near Grandview, Homedale and below C.J. Strike Reservoir, bottom fauna disappeared at an alarming rate, presumably due to altered natural river flow and agricultural pollution.

WHAT IS BEING DONE TO HELP RECOVER THIS SPECIES?

Water quality and habitat conditions in the mainstem Snake River must be improved to begin to recover the Idaho springsnail. Natural reproduction may begin to recur if conservation measures are implemented such as protection of remaining free-flowing habitats from hydro development, prevention of further Snake River diversions, improved water quality and natural flow conditions.

REFERENCES

USFWS. 1995. Snake River Aquatic Species Recovery Plan.

